

Foreign leaders and elections

It is usually best if Presidents and Prime Ministers stay out of each other's elections. In free societies media interviewers can ask foreign leaders to make comments and they do so if they wish.

There are two big differences between President Obama's intervention in our referendum and President Trump's remarks yesterday. President Obama was clearly encouraged to intervene by the UK government who were committed to Remain. They used the intervention to try to persuade voters, drawing attention to it as part of their case in the referendum. The UK government did not ask President Trump to make comments yesterday and is not planning to use his comments in their election campaign.

The retreat from globalisation

Tariffs and other barriers are going up between the USA and China, the USA and the EU, around Iran, between Japan and South Korea and between India and Pakistan over Kashmir. There is a new economic nationalism abroad.

It is also pronounced in some businesses and industries. The vehicle industry in particular is retreating to home factories under the weight of falling demand for diesel and petrol cars.

The Japanese car makers are moving more production from the EU to Japan, partly owing to a rare move to zero tariffs in their new Agreement with the EU. Ford is pulling out of European factories. If the Fiat/Chrysler/Peugeot merger goes ahead they may wish to concentrate EU production in the two home bases of Italy and France.

Globalisation is not always the right answer. Complex supply chains come about often because companies find cheaper components and raw materials from afar which they reckon they can weld into their production to cut costs. Sometimes this turns out to be a false economy. Long distance travel for components both increases travel costs and in some cases adds an additional risk of delay to supply. Too many competing suppliers may not breed good long term relationships between assembler and component maker.

There is a rival school of thought to globalisation which says working closely with a limited number of suppliers that are nearer to the main factory may produce better results. Today suppliers often have to operate full transparency with large corporate buyers, who will expect to know their costs, margin and investment rate. For certain finished products to qualify as coming from a given country for Free Trade Agreement purposes there is often a minimum total value requirement which affects how many components can

be foreign sourced.

President Trump's America first policy is designed to onshore jobs that have gone abroad. It is finding that in the current climate of industrial recession worldwide, with a particular problem in the vehicle industry, it is difficult to increase manufacturing jobs by these means. As the UK comes out of the EU we need to rebuild UK capacity to make more components for industry at home and produce more of our own food.

One of the reasons we need to get on with our exit from the EU is the opportunity it will give us to have our own trade policy, to lower our average tariff and to do a better job at promoting home produced food and goods . It has been damaging to be caught in the US/EU crossfire in the recent tariff disputes.

Remembrance Sunday services

In view of the imminent dissolution of Parliament, I have sent this notice to the organisers of the Remembrance Sunday services in my constituency:

Next week I will cease to be Wokingham's MP on the dissolution of Parliament. All MPs lose the job and the right to use the title , the portcullis symbol and address of the House of Commons.

I was looking forward to attending the Remembrance Day service and presentation of wreaths. I have already made a donation to the British Legion to secure a wreath with the Portcullis emblem on it to lay on behalf of the constituents of Wokingham.

I think in the circumstances I have to send my apologies for the service as I am strongly advised that former MPs must not lay wreaths associated with Parliament during an election period.

I would suggest I lay my wreath after the election should I be returned to Parliament.

Yours sincerely

The Rt Hon Sir John Redwood MP

Prosperity not austerity

Hong Kong is in recession. Germany probably is in recession. Italy was in recession last year and still performing weakly. The US and Chinese economies have slowed. It is time for a UK stimulus to boost our economy.

The government is right to increase spending on schools and hospitals. It also needs to provide some tax cuts for all to increase take home pay, make it cheaper to buy a home and a car and take VAT off items like female hygiene products, home insulation, and other ways of improving home fuel efficiency.

The UK economy has been slowed by the world background and by its own tight monetary and fiscal policies. It's time to relax sensibly. The aim should be prosperity for the many, with more and better paid jobs.

This site in the Election

All MPs lose their jobs when Parliament dissolves. This is not an official MP website so it makes no great difference to this site. I will continue with the blogs and will declare the costs of the site as an election expense.

I have amended my biography. All past references to my role as MP will stay in the archived materials but are of course references to my last service and not to my current position. I am the Prospective Conservative candidate for Wokingham and will write some blogs about the election. I will continue to provide general commentary about other issues where appropriate.

I will not be publishing contributor exhortations to vote for other parties or overtly partisan anti Conservative material during the election period. There will be plenty of that elsewhere. Contributors should not name candidates or particular seats in pieces either to promote or denigrate. National campaigns, policies and arguments are of wider interest.

All articles will be written and published by John Redwood of 30 Rose Street Wokingham RG40 1XU

The Conservative election agent is David Edmonds of 30 Rose Street Wokingham RG40 1XU